



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

June 6, 2001

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the Schultz - Hanford Area Transmission Line Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to build a new transmission line and one of the alternatives we are studying (Alternative 1A) could affect your property. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our process and schedule, and tells where to call for more information.

Proposal - BPA is proposing to construct a transmission line through central Washington. The new 500-kilovolt (kV) line would relieve constraints on several transmission lines across the state. It would also provide more operational flexibility so that BPA can meet its obligations to endangered salmon and maintain transmission capacity to import and export energy.

Alternatives - Possible transmission routes are in Kittitas, Yakima, Grant, and Benton counties (See attached map). The proposed line would be constructed from Schultz Substation (near Ellensburg) to either a substation on the Hanford Reach National Monument within the Hanford Nuclear Reservation or a new substation just southwest of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. Four alternative routes are being considered. All would require the purchase of new right-of-way.

- **Alternative 1** would parallel the existing 500-kV line that runs from Schultz Substation to Vantage Substation and on to Hanford Substation (called the Schultz-Vantage-Hanford line). The new line would be up to 1200 feet from the existing line (BPA must separate major lines by as much as 1200 feet to meet electric reliability standards).
- **Alternative 1A** would parallel the existing 500-kV line from Schultz Substation to Vantage Substation (just like Alternative 1). But a different route would be studied between Vantage and Hanford to avoid irrigated agricultural land. Instead, it would go east from Vantage for about a mile on new right-of-way before turning south for about five miles. It would then turn east and follow the southern edge of the Saddle Mountains for about 15 miles before turning south and paralleling, at a distance of up to 1200 feet, the existing 500-kV Grand Coulee-Hanford line into Hanford.
- **Alternative 2** would parallel the existing Schultz-Vantage 500-kV line at a distance of up to 1200 feet. It would turn south and parallel the existing 230-kV line to Midway Substation, then follow another 230-kV line to a new Blackrock Substation near Benton Rural Electric Association's existing Blackrock Substation. We are looking at the possibility of tearing down the existing 230-kV line in places and rebuilding it with a double-circuit line that would hold both the 230-kV line and the new 500-kV line.

- **Alternative 3** would parallel, at a distance of up to 1200 feet, the existing Schultz-Vantage 500-kV line, but before crossing the Columbia River, the line would head south on new right-of-way mainly across the Yakima Training Center to a new Blackrock Substation.

We are also considering not building a new line, an alternative we always consider.

Next Steps – We are working on the environmental analysis. The information we gather will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment late this year. To complete the environmental work, BPA needs to conduct on-the-ground environmental surveys. We also need to begin preliminary mapping and design work to refine the possible routes.

To do this work, we may need to access property along the proposed routes. If so, we will contact those property owners to request permission.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2004.

For More Information – If you have any questions about this proposal, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713; at my direct number, (503) 230-5525; or send an e-mail to lcdriessen@bpa.gov. Information on the project will be posted on BPA's web site at www.efw.bpa.gov under *environmental planning/analysis*.

Please return the enclosed postcard to receive a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Otherwise you will receive notice when it is available.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,



Lou Driessen
Project Manager

2 Enclosures:

Map

Postcard

